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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 24, 2007

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BOTULISM FEARS PROMPT RECALL OF CANNED FOOD FOR HUMANS AND PETS

A nationwide recall of canned meat products possibly contaminated with botulism toxin has been jointly announced by U.S.D.A's Food Safety and Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration. Foodborne botulism is a rare but serious paralytic illness caused by consuming foods that contain botulinum toxin, a nerve toxin that is produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*.

Many of the recalled products may have been distributed to a number of Idaho stores. The recall of products for humans and pets includes, but is not limited to Castleberry's Hot Dog Chili Sauce and Cattle Drive Chili. Canned food items also include canned chili sauce, chili, beef stew, hash, corned beef hash, barbecue pork, barbecue beef, chip beef, Brunswick stew, and sausage gravy. Natural Balance canned dog food is also included in the recall. Consumers may refer to the following web sites for a complete list of recalled products:

- http://www.castleberrys.com/news_productrecall.asp (for all products)
- <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html> (for FDA-regulated products)
- http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/index.asp (for USDA-regulated products)

"Consumers are advised not to eat the canned food products listed or to feed them to their pets," says Patrick Guzzle, Food Protection Program manager for the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare.

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“Castleberry’s, the company implicated as the source for the contaminated ingredients, has agreed to recall all of the listed products that may in the distribution chain, regardless of the "best buy" date stamped on the bottom of the can. Other foods that should be discarded are those recalled products with missing or unreadable “best by” dates or foods that may have been prepared with a recalled product.”

Consumers should dispose of recalled products by putting them in a non-recyclable trash receptacle after double-bagging in plastic bags. For further information on proper disposal and other issues surrounding this recall, consumers should visit Castleberry’s Web site (www.castleberrys.com). A toll-free hotline is also available for consumer questions at 1-800-203-4412

There are four persons currently known to have contracted botulism from the recalled products located in Indiana (2) and Texas (2). Persons with signs or symptoms of botulism who have eaten Castleberry’s brand Hot Dog Chili Sauce, Cattle Drive Chili or any of the other recalled products are advised to immediately contact their health care provider. Symptoms include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, or muscle weakness. If untreated, the illness may progress from head to toe, with paralysis of the face, arms, breathing muscles, trunk, and legs. Symptoms generally begin 18 to 36 hours after eating a contaminated food, but they can occur as early as 6 hours or as late as 10 days. Health care providers evaluating persons with signs of botulism should contact their district health department immediately. People should contact their veterinarian with any questions about botulism in a pet.

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(**Editors:** for additional information or an interview, contact Ross Mason at 208-334-0693)